

## **Helicopter Early Launch Process Guidelines**

### **SAC Air Ambulance Subcommittee**

**Definition:** Helicopter Early Launch Process (HELP) is the request for an air ambulance response prior to EMS arrival on scene.

I. The Helicopter Early Launch Process should be considered when EMS is greater than **20** minutes from the ill or injured patient **and** one of the following criteria is met:

A. **Trauma Patient** with apparent significant injury and with the following mechanism or conditions:

1. Motor vehicle crash (significant examples: ejection, rollover, fatality, in same vehicle)
2. Pedestrian struck by a motor vehicle
3. Motorcycle or ATV crash
4. Head Injury with decreased level of consciousness
5. New paralysis
6. Penetrating trauma of chest, abdomen, head or groin
7. Amputation or degloving injury
8. Logging/Farming/Industrial accidents
9. Drowning/Near Drowning
10. Pregnant Patient

B. **Burn Patient**

1. Greater than 20% body surface area burned
2. Inhalation Injury (closed space – facial burns)

C **Medical Patient**

1. Severe Chest Pain and/or suspected STEMI (S-T elevation myocardial infarct or life threatening heart attacks)
2. Uncontrolled Bleeding
3. Poisoning/overdose, especially with decreased level of consciousness
4. Respiratory distress
5. Anaphylaxis/severe allergic reaction
6. Significant mental status change
7. Continuous seizure
8. Suspected Stroke

II. An air ambulance should be considered when it will assist the Time Critical Diagnosis patient in arriving at the appropriate facility during the time window specific to the disease.

III. Local HELP policies and procedures should be established with the approval of the ground emergency medical response agencies and consistent with existing Revised Statutes, Chapter 190, Emergency Services Section 190.134.

**Note: These guidelines were developed by the Air Ambulance Subcommittee to be used by agencies that incorporate early launch into their protocols.**